

Trinity Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
Monday, December 17, 2018

Present: Rob Baldwin (Rector), Susan Terry (Assistant Rector), Kim Mandle (Senior Warden), David Severance (Junior Warden), Jennifer Attocknie, Brenda Clary, Heather Eichman, Andrew Hoyt, Richard Lungstrum, Allison Marker, Katherine McGillivray, Elizabeth Miller (Treasurer), Charles Olcese, Maria Thompson (Clerk)

Guests: Lindy Eakin, Rachel Schwaller, Vashti Winterburg

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Declaration of Quorum

A count was taken, and a quorum declared.

Minutes of the November Meeting

Heather made a motion to accept the Minutes of the November 2018 Vestry meeting. Richard seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Rector's Report

This Advent I have been promoting the theme "Love your neighbor(hood)" as a way to focus our Christian discipleship in the season of Advent and hopefully into the upcoming year. There have been many ways in which this has been happening this season. The Friendship Circle (with a lot of support from the choir) organized shopping expeditions to purchase items for children currently under the care of CASA. In the Adult Forum, we have begun our speaker series on prison reform. My goal is to continue to engage the congregation in conversations about who are most relevant ministry relationships are in this community and what we can be doing to strengthen those relationships.

On the topic of new relationships, Bishop-elect Bascom will be visiting TEST this Wednesday afternoon for tea. This meeting will her first official stop at Trinity since the walkabout prior to the election. Bishop-elect Bascom has a strong interest in environmental stewardship, and is excited that Trinity does as well.

Sheryl Poole submitted her resignation as Office Manager, with her last day being December 27th. Replacing her is one of the top priorities of the upcoming weeks, because we are currently also shorthanded on office volunteers who might normally take up some of the slack. Sheryl has an exciting new job working at a school associated with a large synagogue in Overland Park and we all wish her the best.

At the time of writing this Kim Mandle and I are going to be meeting today with Canon Torey Lightcap and the treasurer of the diocese to discuss our apportionment issue.

While the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services are coming together, we are in need of more participants in the Christmas pageant.

Finally, I will be out of the office December 26 and 27.

Treasurer's Report

Because the Vestry meeting was moved up a week, the November financial reports were not available. Liz emailed the minutes of the December 16th Finance Committee meeting. She also sent a summary of our financial situation and actions which the Vestry will need to consider, along with relevant documents:

Trinity was able to make the November apportionment payment of \$6,375. We also expect to be able to pay the December apportionment payment of \$6,375 later this month. I will be working with Vickie Randel right after Christmas to determine how much of the \$44,632 owed to the Diocese can be paid in late December. The outstanding balance of apportionment due to the Diocese at December 31, 2018 will be recorded on Trinity's financial records as a liability. The Vestry will need to determine in early 2019 how it is going to handle that liability.

Trinity has received a letter from the IRS, dated November 26, 2018, indicating that Trinity does not need to take any action on the tax penalty for failure to file W-2s in 2015, and that we should expect to hear from the IRS in the next 60 days on this issue.

As you know, the important financial matter that the Vestry needs to address during tomorrow's meeting is the approval of the 2019 Mission Plan (budget). Attached is an analysis of 2019 pledges that Lindy has prepared, which you may find useful. Since the November 26th Vestry meeting, Trinity has received three pledge renewals and nine members have increased their 2019 pledges. However, the total of the renewals and the increased pledges is \$9,768. This brings the total 2019 pledges in hand to \$355,353. Since we used a 2019 pledge income assumption of \$352,687 in the 2019 budget draft, the increased pledges do not warrant any changes in the projected 2019 pledge income at this time. Also attached is a final version of the 2019 Mission Plan spreadsheet. You will note that "2019 Option #1" (which received the majority of votes at the Vestry budget retreat) has been highlighted in light blue. I have updated three numbers (shown in orange). I have added \$4,000 of fundraising income, which assumes a second fundraising event in 2019 (and allows this budget to balance). I have updated the Miller Management fee expense, based on the new monthly fee for 2019. I have also updated the projected 2018 apportionment expense to include the November and December regular monthly apportionment payments.

I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for us as Vestry to adopt a 2019 Mission Plan at tomorrow's meeting. There are a variety of reasons why this is necessary, including but not limited to the following: (most importantly) there are several staff members who will be affected by the Vestry's budget decisions, and we owe it to them to provide as much notice as possible; the Diocese expects the Vestry to provide prudent leadership of the financial management of the parish, and adopting a timely budget is part of prudent financial management; Father Rob needs to know the budget he will have available so that he can determine what hours and salary he can offer to prospective Parish Administrator candidates; we have to produce the 2019 budget for presentation to the parish at the Annual Meeting on January 27th (and the office may be short staffed during January); Miller Management needs the 2019 budget for Trinity's financial reports, beginning in early January; and the fiscal year begins on January 1st, so staff have to begin implementation work as soon as the budget is approved by the Vestry. Finally, it is my personal conviction that, once we approve the 2019 budget, the Vestry can turn our focus to the positive--how we can grow our membership and live our commitment to "loving our neighbor[hod]."

The diocesan comptroller and the Canon to the Ordinary called regarding our apportionment payments for 2018, asking what caused us to be in arrears, what we are planning to do about it, and what they can do to support us. They noted that we do things no other church in the diocese does, and they would like us to remain current for 2019. They see what we have done to be transparent and work to solve our financial problems, and they would prefer to see us thrive, so they suggested that we inform the Council of Trustees that we are prepared to default on our 2018 apportionment payments. As a consequence, we would lose a seat, voice and vote at the 2019 convention. The Council of Trustees would then need to submit a resolution to let us back in. This is something that has happened frequently in the diocese, though we have not been through it.

David made a motion to make our December 2018 diocesan apportionment payment, then inform the Council of Trustees that we intend to default on the remainder of our 2018 apportionment. Heather seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Parishioner & Staff Comments

Rachel Schwaller expressed disappointment that the congregation was not asked about what should or should not be considered for cuts as the 2019 budget was worked out.

- She feels our finances are not so much a budget issue as they are a growth issue. Bringing in more people will bring in more money
- She suggested that we clearly articulate our mission and avoid making cuts in positions that lead to growth. Among her concerns were cuts to the stipends we pay to students who sing in the choir. She felt that the choir brings these students to Trinity and their participation helps the ministry of the church.
- She feels "we tend to throw money at our problems" by hiring people to provide leadership in many areas, and suggested we rely more on volunteers.

Vashti Winterburg suggested the Vestry be more intentional about asking for money and work harder to get it. She also asked that the grocery gift card program be revived. She agreed with Rachel that we should avoid making cuts in positions that can lead to growth through evangelism.

Mthr. Susan told the Vestry to think about how the work will be done if we make cuts to positions, and she pointed out that Fr. Rob cannot be expected to do everything.

2019 Mission Plan

The Vestry went into executive session to discuss the 2019 Mission Plan. Fr. Rob and Mthr. Susan left the room.

Liz had prepared a spreadsheet that outlined two options for the 2019 budget.

Katherine made a motion to approve budget option #1 for 2019, amending it to include eliminating the salary for the Children's Choir Director, reducing the salary for the Music Director, eliminating stipends for the choir's section leaders, and reducing the salary for the Assistant Rector by a lesser amount than originally submitted. Liz seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Junior Warden's Report

We are trying to get wi-fi for the parish hall. David has talked with Midco and AT&T, and it looks we'll get better pricing from AT&T.

Nominating Committee

Several people have agreed to run for Vestry in 2019. The committee would like to create a ballot, so will continue to look for more candidates.

New Clerk

Kathy Hanks will be the new Clerk of the Vestry beginning in January 2019.

Annual Meeting

The 2019 Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 27th.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Thompson, Clerk